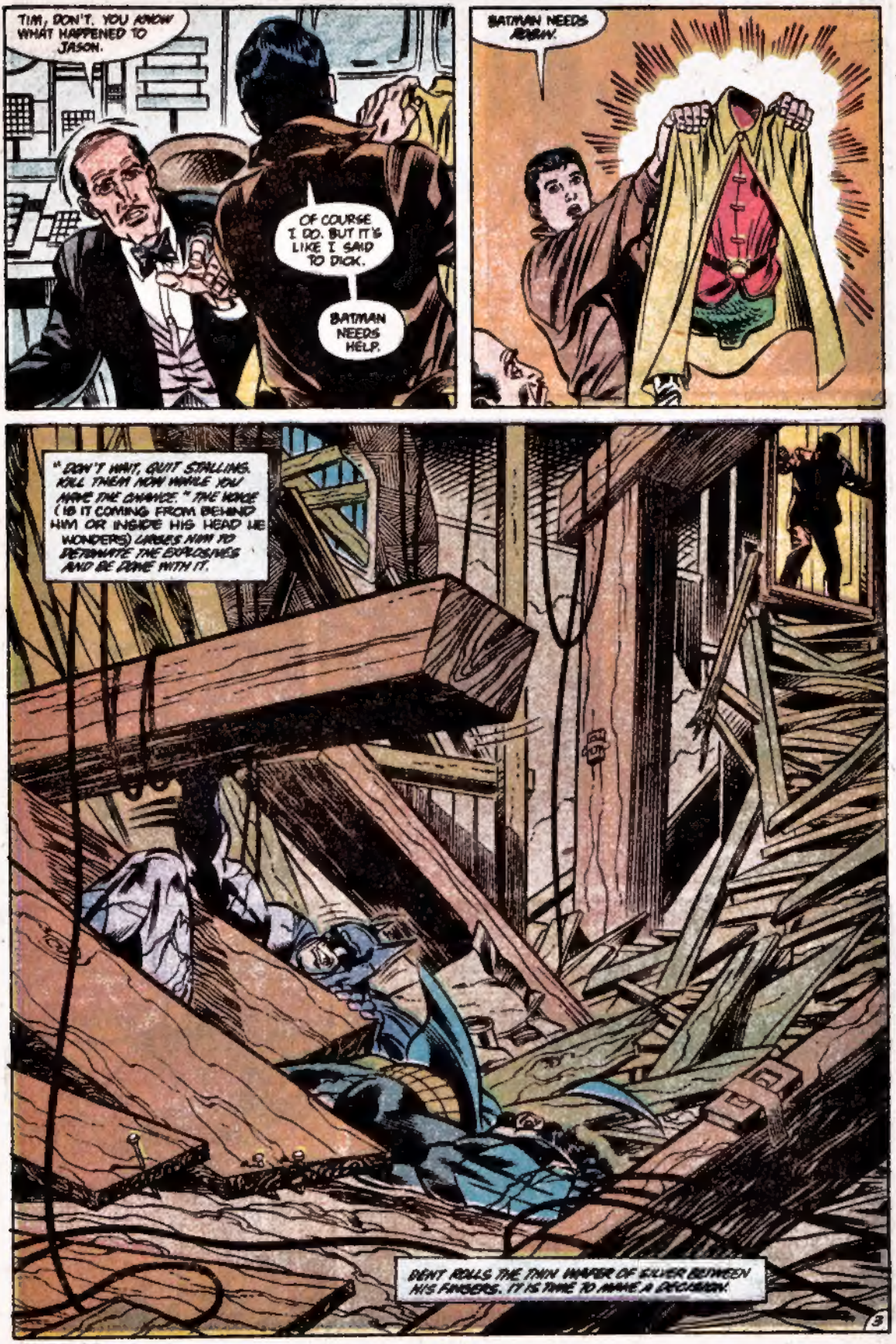
DC
BATMAN
442
US $1.00
CAN $1.25
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
GEORGE PÉREZ
R
Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying • Part 5 of 5
@all.binaries.pictures.comics

ALFRED, IT'S ALMOST TWO IN THE MORNING. WE SHOULD HAVE HEARD FROM THEM BY NOW.
SOMETHING'S HAPPENED.
WHAT DO WE DO?
MASTER TIMOTHY, WE WAIT HERE AS I ALWAYS DO.
PATIENTLY.
A LONELY PLACE OF DYING
Chapter Five: REBIRTH
MARV WOLFMAN . writer
GEORGE PÉREZ . co-plotter
JIM APARO, MIKE DeCARLO . penciller
. inker
CHRISTIE . letterer
ADRIENNE ROY . colorist
DAN RASPLER . assoc. editor
DENNY O'NEIL . editor
BOB KANE . creator

BATMAN 442 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BATMAN, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate $12.00, Canada $17.00, all other foreign $24.00. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1989 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017 (212) 949-6850. Printed in U.S.A.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Bros. Company

BUT YOU KNOW HE AND DICK'VE GONE AFTER TWO-FACE. YOU KNOW THE DANGER.
HOW CAN YOU JUST PUT IT OUT OF YOUR MIND?
IT'S NEVER OUT OF MY THOUGHTS. NEVER. IT CONSUMES ME.
I SPEND EACH EVENING FEARING THE WORST...
...AND PRAYING FOR THAT FEELING OF RELIEF I GET WHEN MASTER BRUCE RETURNS.
NO MATTER HIS CONDITION.
TIMOTHY, IF YOU DWELL ON WORST-CASE SCENARIOS, YOU CAN WORRY YOURSELF TO AN EARLY GRAVE.
I'M SORRY. I'M REALLY SORRY. BUT THIS IS SO NEW TO ME.
MAYBE SOMEDAY I CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO DO WHAT YOU DO..
BUT RIGHT NOW WE KNOW WHERE ME AND DICK ARE.
AND I KEEP THINKING THEY'RE IN TROUBLE.
I'VE GOT TO DO SOME-THING.
2


TIM, DON'T. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO JASON.
OF COURSE I DO. BUT IT'S LIKE I SAID TO DICK.
BATMAN NEEDS HELP.
BATMAN NEEDS ROBIN.
"DON'T WAIT, QUIT STALLING. KILL THEM NOW WHILE YOU HAVE THE CHANCE." THE VOICE (IS IT COMING FROM BEHIND HIM OR INSIDE HIS HEAD HE WONDERS) URGES HIM TO DETONATE THE EXPLOSIVES AND BE DONE WITH IT.
BENT ROLLS THE THIN WAFER OF SILVER BETWEEN HIS FINGERS. IT IS TIME TO MAKE A DECISION.
3

SHUT UP, SHUT UP!! I--I KNOW WHAT TO DO.
BUT THERE ARE PRIORITIES. THERE ARE PROCEDURES!
WITHOUT PROCEDURE THERE IS ANARCHY. SYSTEMS FALL APART.
I WAS A LAWYER LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THESE THINGS CANNOT BE LEFT TO...
...CHANCE.
THUNK
UNNHUHH--
WAKE UP. I NEED YOU.
YOU SEE? FOLLOW PROCEDURE AND IT ALL WORKS OUT.
IT'S ALMOST TWO A.M.. NOW THEY CAN DIE.

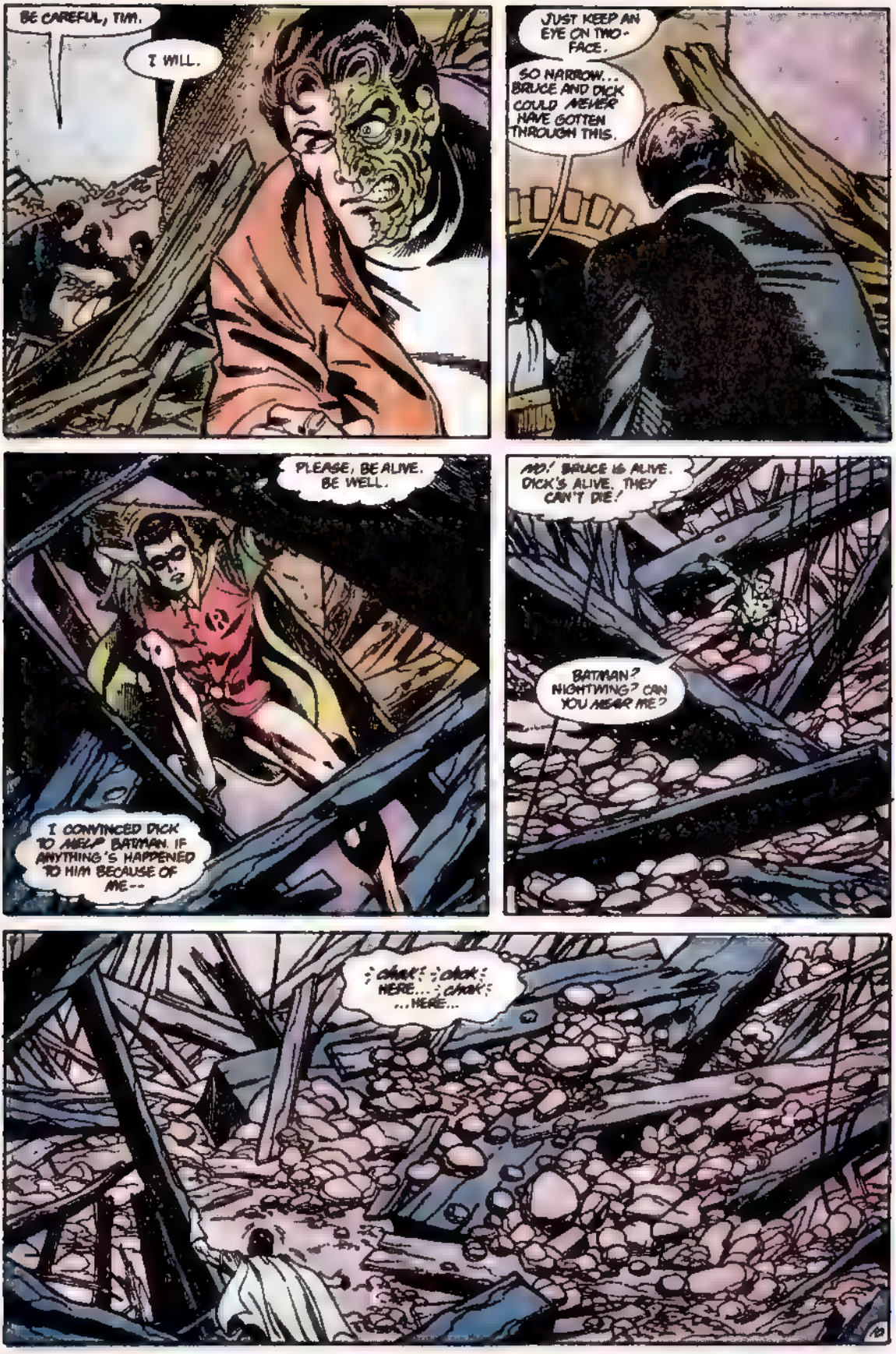
THIS IS WRONG. I SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS.
ALFRED, YOU HAVE TO.
SINCE THAT NIGHT AT THE CIRCUS WHEN I FIRST SAW HIM SWOOPING DOWN FROM THE DARKNESS... FROM THE POINT DICK JOINED HIM-
...BATMAN AND ROBIN HAVE MEANT EVERYTHING TO ME.
I'VE FOLLOWED THEM BOTH... I KNOW THEM SO WELL. I KNEW WHEN DICK LEFT TO BECOME NIGHTWING.
I KNEW WHEN JASON CAME AND BECAME ROBIN... AND I KNEW WHEN JASON DIED.
AND I SAW HOW BATMAN CHANGED WITHOUT THERE BEING A ROBIN TO CARE ABOUT.
LOOK, I NEVER WANTED THIS FOR MYSELF...
...BUT I WANTED BATMAN AND ROBIN BACK TOGETHER THE WAY THEY SHOULD BE.
AND IF DICK WON'T BECOME ROBIN AGAIN...
...SOMEONE ELSE HAS TO!
THIS WAS A BEAUTIFUL HOUSE. MY GRANDFATHER BEGAN CONSTRUCTION ON IT IN 1899...
...AND COMPLETED IT TWENTY MONTHS LATER. TWO YEARS' WORK BRIDGING TWO CENTURIES.
5

I HATE DESTROYING ANYTHING SO... SYMMETRICAL.
BUT THEN I HAVE NO CHOICE!
THE RULES MUST BE FOLLOWED. TO REFUSE--
-- INVITES THE DESTRUCTION OF EVERYTHING I HOLD DEAR.
NOOO!!

TWO-FACE, IF BATMAN AND NIGHTWING ARE DEAD--
--ROBIN IS GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY!
I WAS MOWDASSING WHEN THE BRAT WOULD SHOW HIS LITTLE CHERUBIC FACE.
YOU'VE BEEN MOWING FOR MONTHS NOW.
GET DETENTION? HAVE TO STAY IN AFTER SCHOOL?
YOU KNOW THERE WERE RUMORS ABOUT YOU.
RUMORS THAT YOU HAD BOUGHT THE FARM.
BUT I KNEW BETTER. IF YOU WERE TO DIE, I'D BE YOUR KILLER.
JUST AS I'M THE ONE WHO FINALLY MURDERED BATMAN.
7

LITHE AS EVER, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU!
WHERE'S THE GUNS, KID?
WAM
YOU'RE ALWAYS SPOUTING THOSE AWFUL JOKES!
LOST YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR?
TWO-FACE--DON'T!
HE'S JUST A BOY!
THAT'S HIS PROBLEM, OLD MAN.
NO! THERE HAS BEEN ENOUGH DEATH!
LET GO, YOU FOOL.

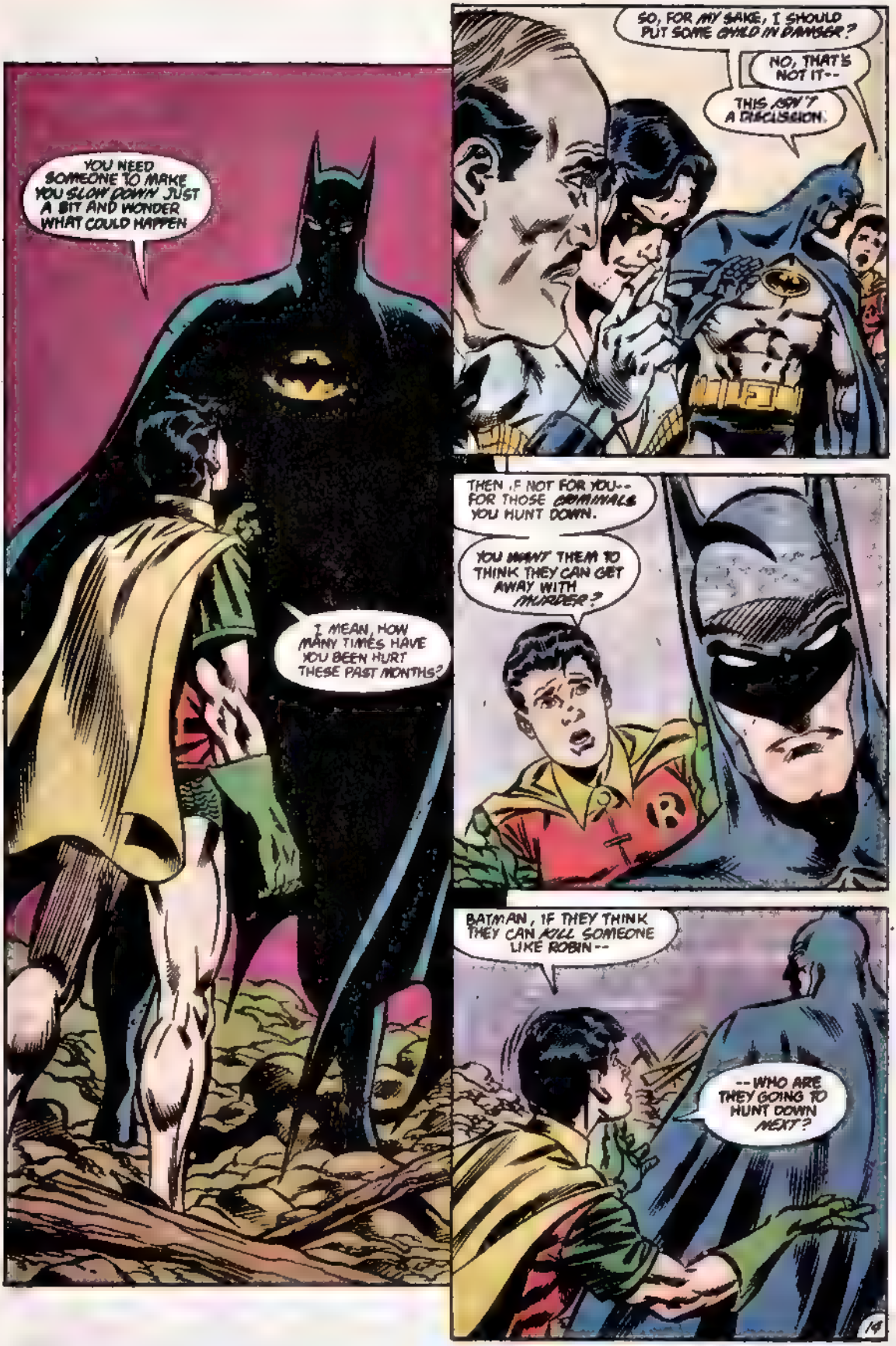
ALFRED!!
ALFRED, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
MY STOMACH WILL ACHE A BIT, BUT I BELIEVE I WILL SURVIVE.
I WAS WORRIED FOR YOU.
SO WAS I. I'VE WORKED OUT. I'VE PRACTICED HALF MY LIFE... STUDIED KARATE...
...BUT I STILL DIDN'T KNOW IF I COULD REALLY HOLD MY OWN.
AND I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU--
HUNH?
YOU FOUND SOMETHING?
SOME SORT OF BOARDED-UP WINDOW OR SOMETHING.
IT'S A COAL-CHUTE.
YEARS AGO FURNACES WERE HEATED BY COAL.
TRUCKS WOULD DELIVER IT EACH MONTH AND SEND IT THROUGH THE CHUTE TO A BASEMENT COAL BIN.
GREAT. THEN THERE'S A WAY INSIDE.
I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE ALIVE OR NOT, BUT BATMAN AND NIGHTWING ARE DOWN THERE.
I'VE GOT TO FIND THEM.
9

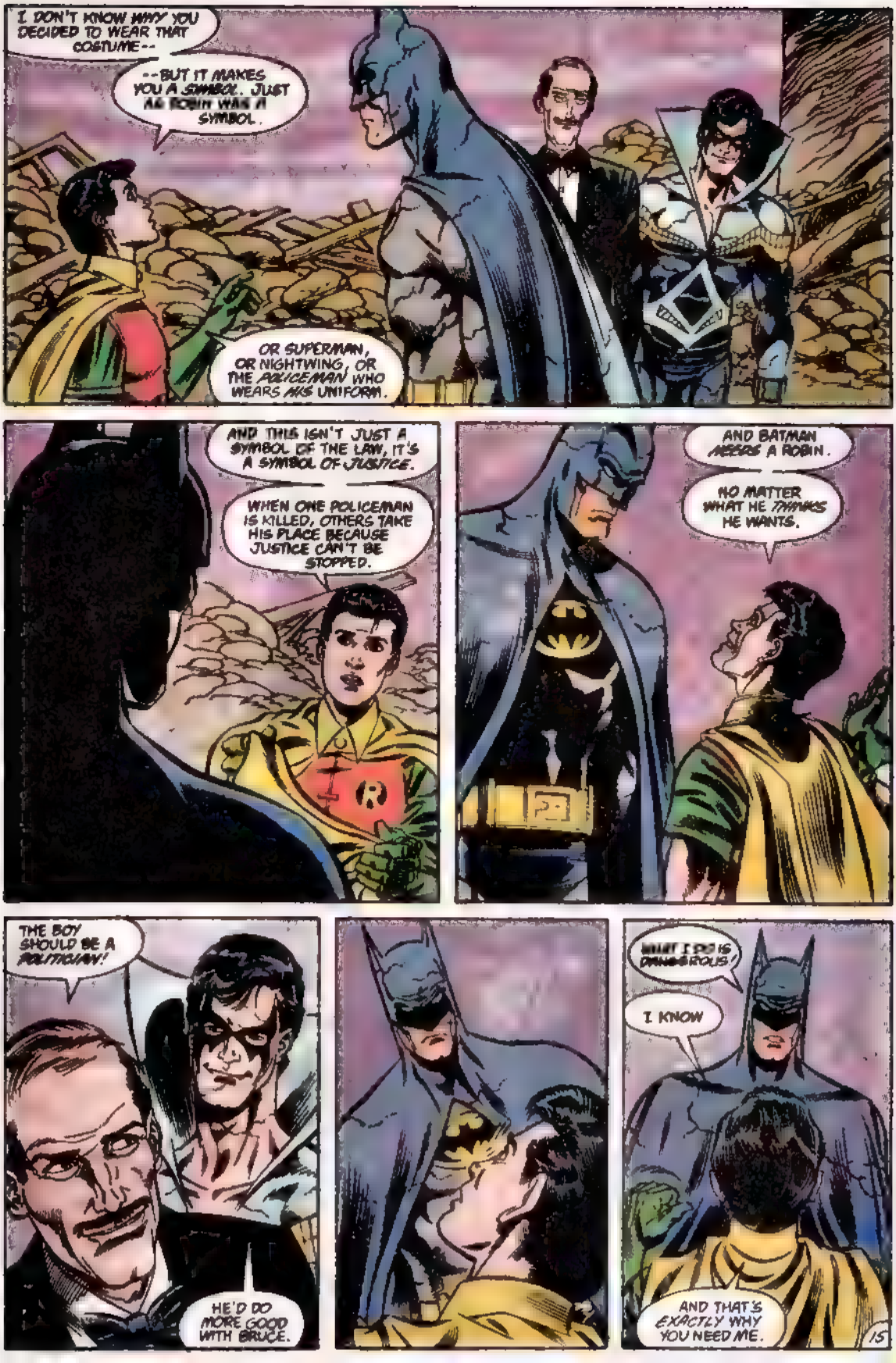

BE CAREFUL, TIM.
I WILL.
JUST KEEP AN EYE ON TWO-FACE.
SO NARROW... BRUCE AND DICK COULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN THROUGH THIS.
PLEASE, BE ALIVE. BE WELL.
I CONVINCED DICK TO HELP BATMAN. IF ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM BECAUSE OF ME--
NO! BRUCE IS ALIVE. DICK'S ALIVE. THEY CAN'T DIE!
BATMAN? NIGHTWING? CAN YOU HEAR ME?
chak chak HERE... chak ...HERE...

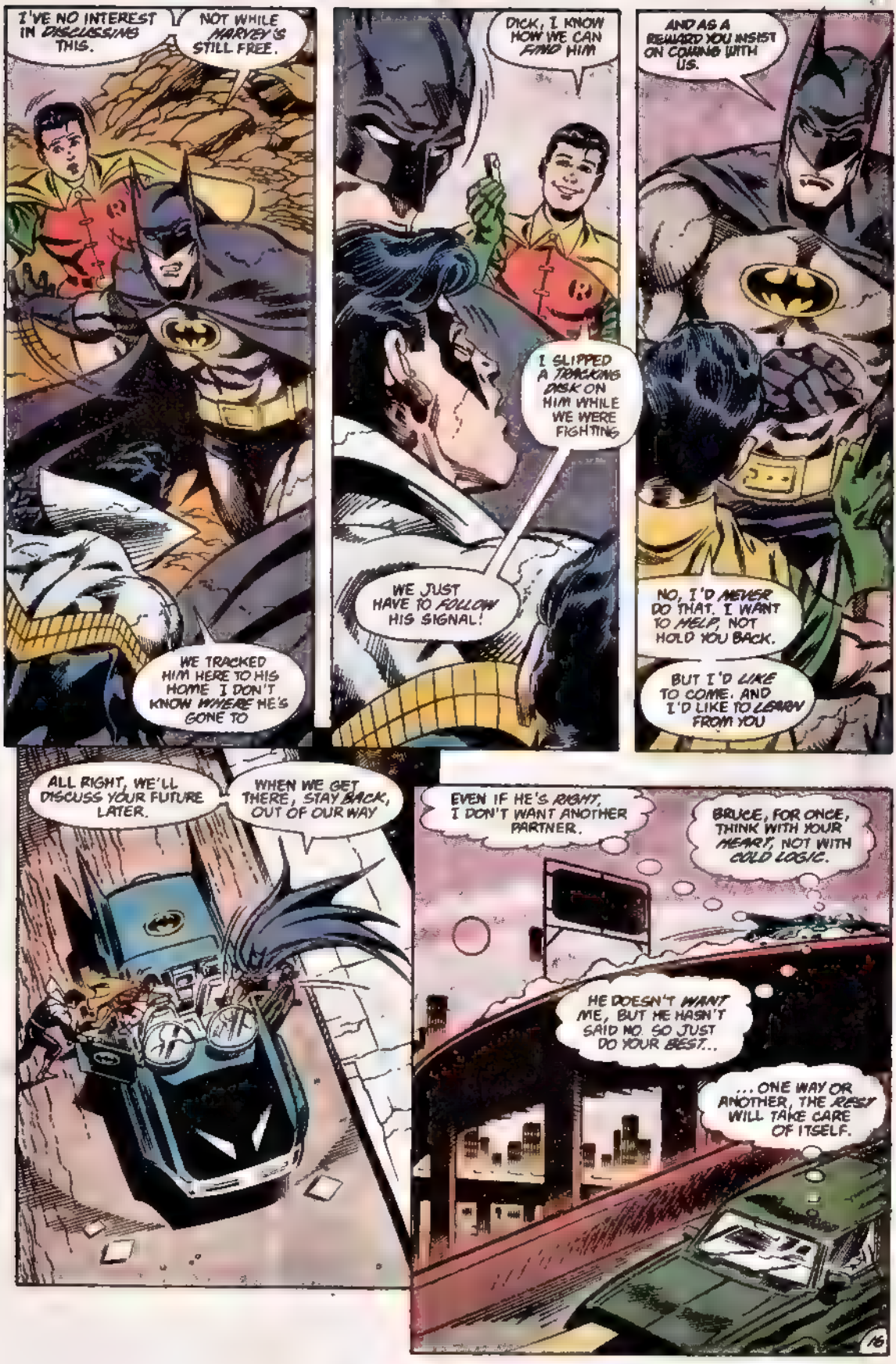
BATMAN? WHERE--?
:CHOKK: UNDER THE CROSSBEAMS...
ARE YOU BOTH ALL RIGHT?
...CAN'T MOVE... PINNED.
AND I CAN'T MOVE THE BEAMS WITHOUT THE ROCKS FALLING ON YOU.
JUST LIE THERE. I'LL HAVE TO CLEAR THE BEAMS BEFORE I CAN GET TO YOU.
TWO-FACE...:CHOK: WHERE IS HE?
I LEFT HIM WITH ALFRED. THE POLICE SHOULD BE COMING
POLICE? WH-WHO ARE YOU?
...
ROBIN.
FOR NOW, JUST CALL ME ROBIN.
I'VE GOT THE ROCKS OFF THE BEAMS.
BATMAN, HOW ARE YOU TWO DOING?
BATMAN!!
BATMAN!!

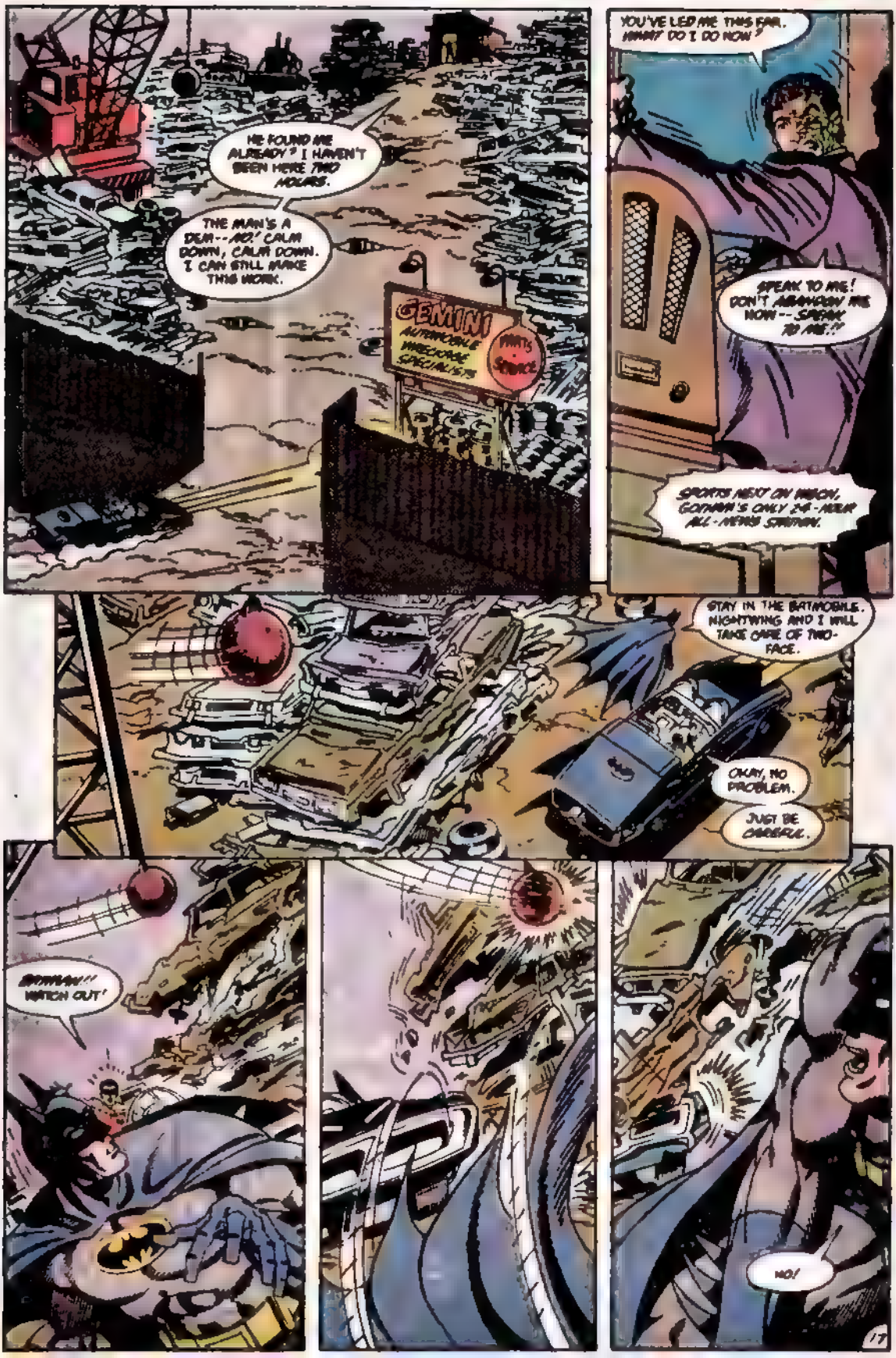
UNNNH UNNNH UNNNHNH
DID IT... I DID IT.
CAN YOU MOVE?
I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE--
--BUT YOU'RE NOT ROBIN!
THERE IS NO MORE ROBIN!
BATMAN... I ONLY WANTED TO HELP
I CARE ABOUT YOU. I CARE ABOUT ROBIN.
BRUCE--PLEASE LISTEN TO ME
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I KNOW YOU'RE BRUCE WAYNE I KNOW. NIGHTWING'S REALLY DICK GRAYSON.
AND... AND I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO JASON TODD!
12

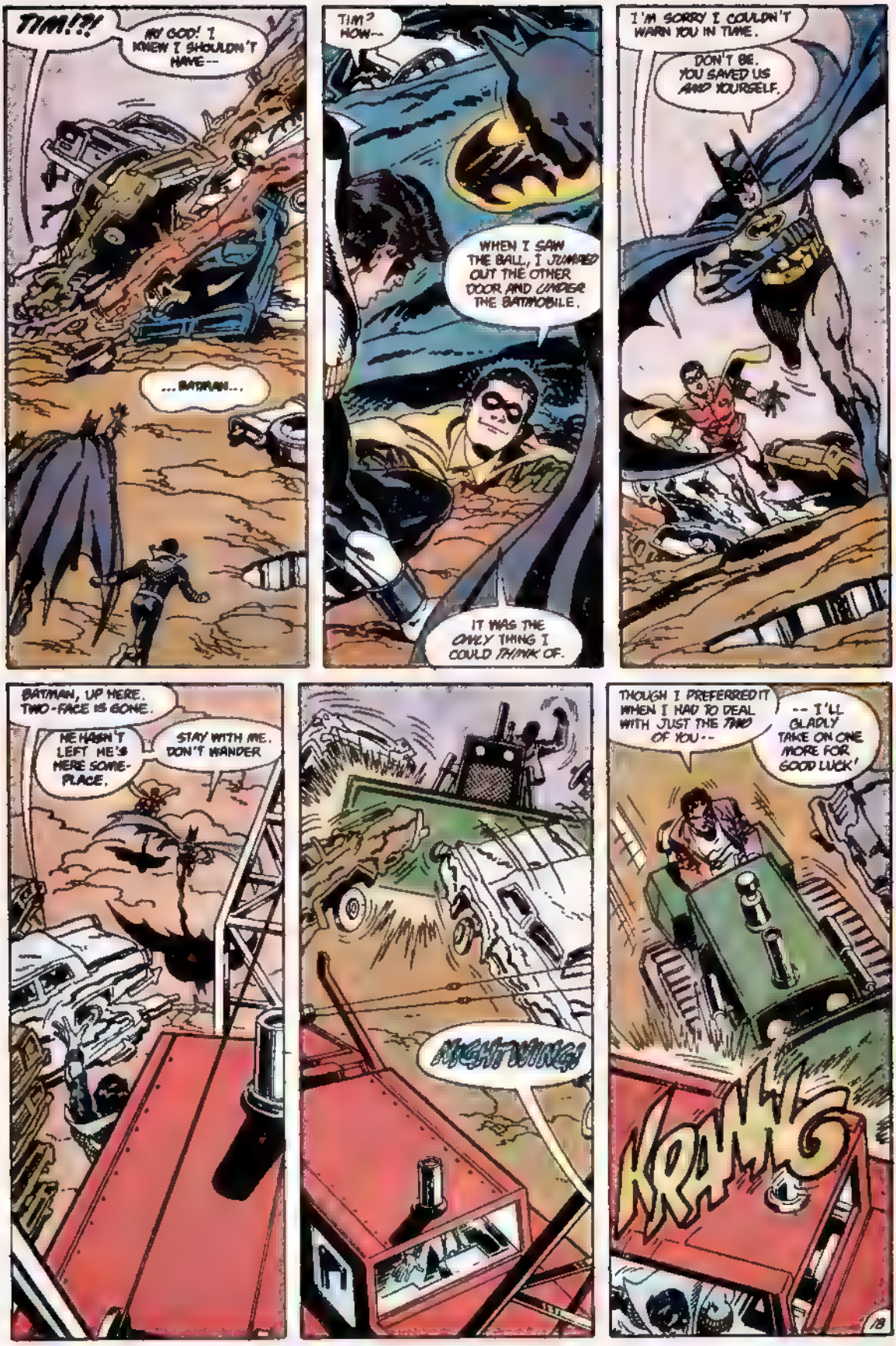
SIR, THANK HEAVEN TIMOTHY HELPED FREE YOU.
SIR, YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HIM CONFRONT TWO-FACE
YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD
HIS INSTINCTS FOR DETECTIVE WORK ARE ASTOUNDING.
AND HIS ACROBATIC ABILITY IS QUITE REMARKABLE.
HE'S ALMOST AS BRILLIANT AS WAS MASTER DICK.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?
ONE BOY DIED WEARING THAT COSTUME.
I'M NOT TAKING THAT RISK A THIRD TIME.
I NEVER THOUGHT OF BECOMING ROBIN, BUT WITH YOU TRAINING ME, I CAN DO IT.
BATMAN HAS TO HAVE A ROBIN.
WHERE IS THAT WRITTEN IN STONE?
THERE'S NO MORE NEED FOR THERE TO BE A ROBIN --
--THAN THERE IS FOR A BATMAN?
B-BATMAN, IT'S HARD FOR ME TO SAY THIS TO YOU --
--BUT SINCE JASON DIED, EVERYONE'S NOTICED HOW YOU'VE CHANGED
13

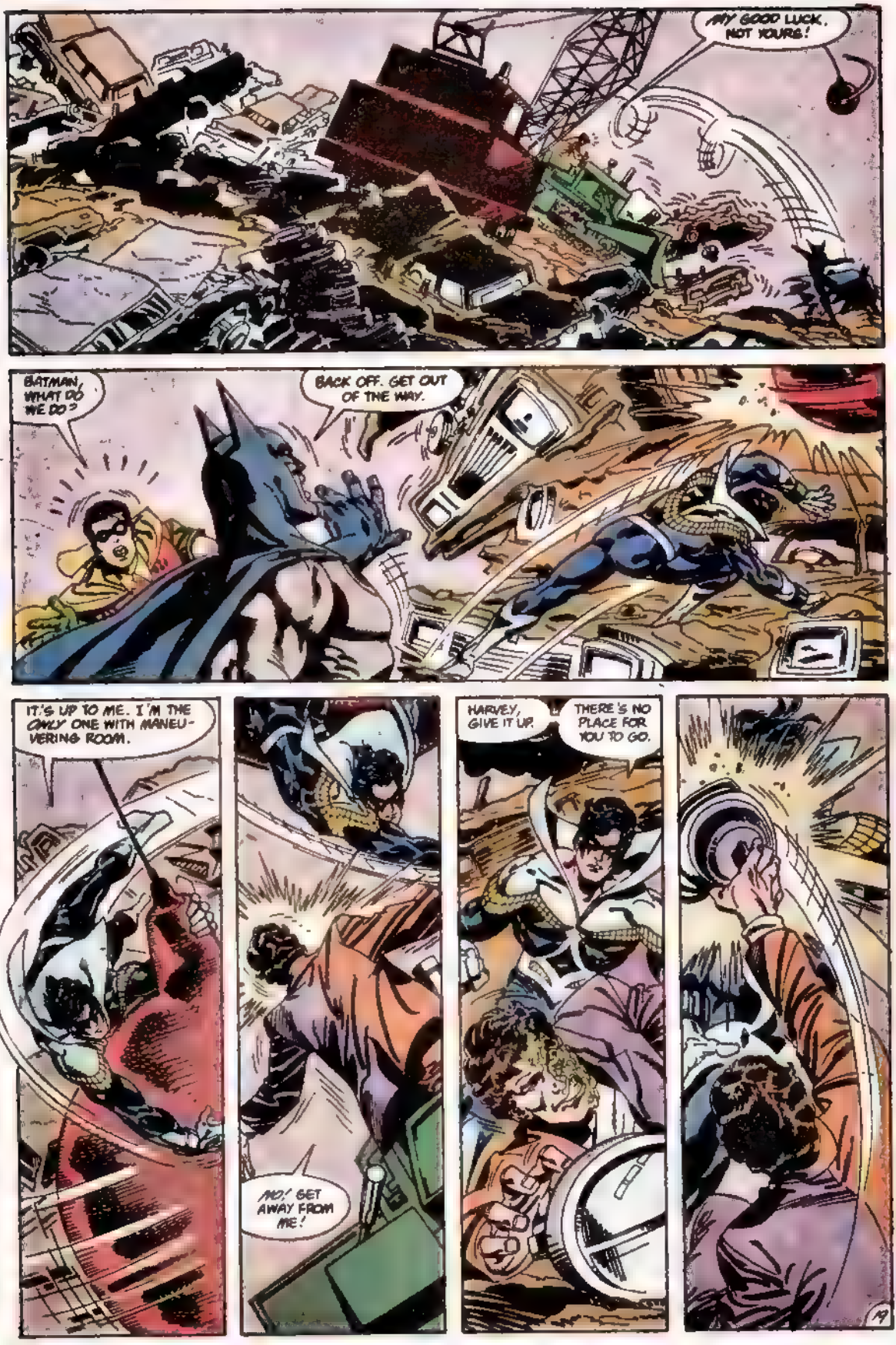

YOU NEED SOMEONE TO MAKE YOU SLOW DOWN! JUST A BIT AND WONDER WHAT COULD HAPPEN
I MEAN, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN HURT THESE PAST MONTHS?
SO, FOR MY SAKE, I SHOULD PUT SOME CHILD IN DANGER?
NO, THAT'S NOT IT--
THIS ISN'T A DISCUSSION.
THEN, IF NOT FOR YOU-- FOR THOSE CRIMINALS YOU HUNT DOWN.
YOU WANT THEM TO THINK THEY CAN GET AWAY WITH MURDER?
BATMAN, IF THEY THINK THEY CAN KILL SOMEONE LIKE ROBIN--
--WHO ARE THEY GOING TO HUNT DOWN NEXT?
14


I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU DECIDED TO WEAR THAT COSTUME--
--BUT IT MAKES YOU A SYMBOL. JUST AS ROBIN WAS A SYMBOL.
OR SUPERMAN, OR NIGHTWING, OR THE POLICEMAN WHO WEARS HIS UNIFORM.
AND THIS ISN'T JUST A SYMBOL OF THE LAW, IT'S A SYMBOL OF JUSTICE.
WHEN ONE POLICEMAN IS KILLED, OTHERS TAKE HIS PLACE BECAUSE JUSTICE CAN'T BE STOPPED.
AND BATMAN NEEDS A ROBIN.
NO MATTER WHAT HE THINKS HE WANTS.
THE BOY SHOULD BE A POLITICIAN!
HE'D DO MORE GOOD WITH BRUCE.
WHAT I DO IS DANGEROUS!
I KNOW
AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHY YOU NEED ME.
15

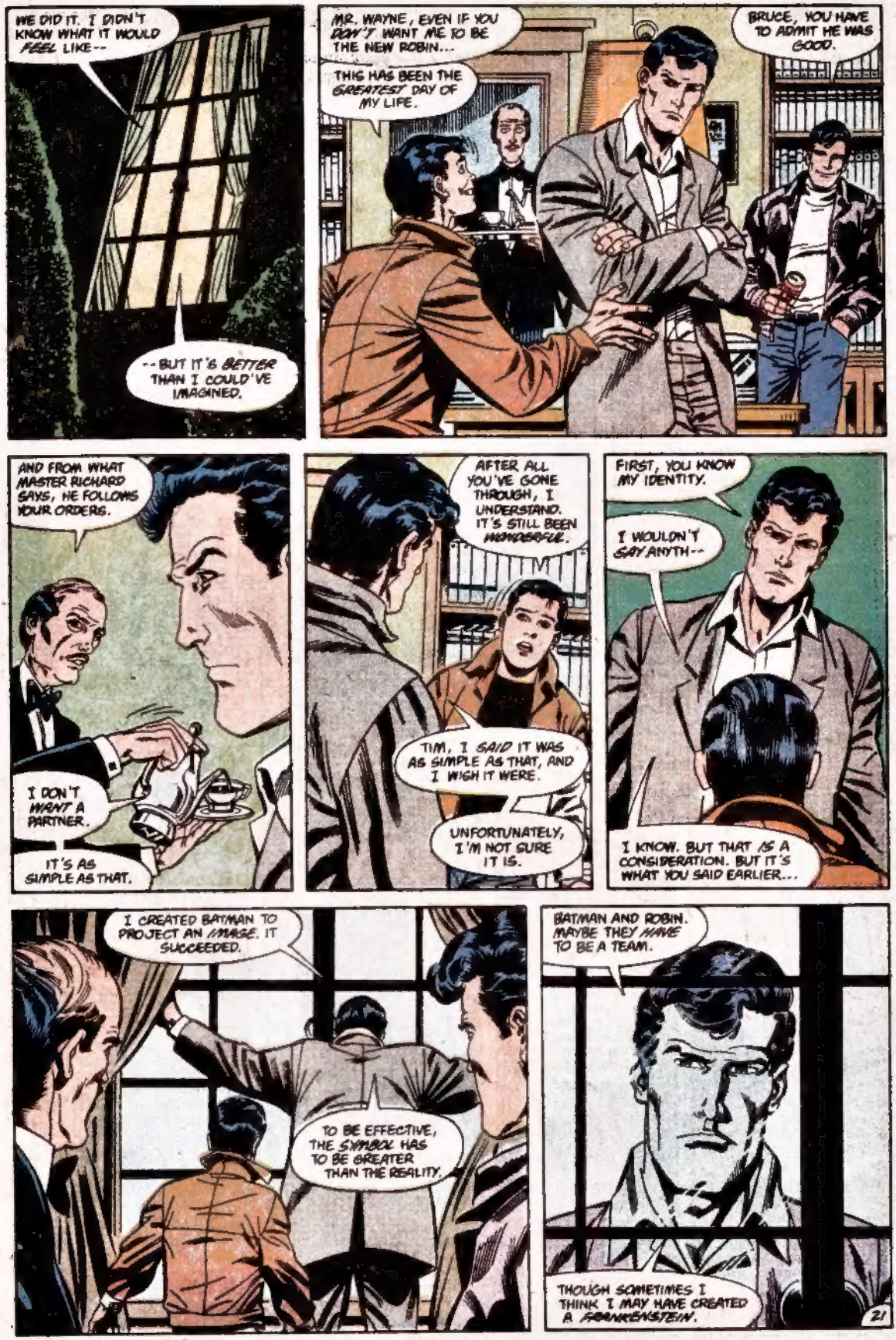

I'VE NO INTEREST IN DISCUSSING THIS.
NOT WHILE HARVEY IS STILL FREE.
WE TRACKED HIM HERE TO HIS HOME I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S GONE TO
DICK, I KNOW HOW WE CAN FIND HIM
I SLIPPED A TRACKING DISK ON HIM WHILE WE WERE FIGHTING
WE JUST HAVE TO FOLLOW HIS SIGNAL!
AND AS A REWARD YOU INSIST ON COMING WITH US.
NO, I'D NEVER DO THAT. I WANT TO HELP, NOT HOLD YOU BACK.
BUT I'D LIKE TO COME. AND I'D LIKE TO LEARN FROM YOU
ALL RIGHT, WE'LL DISCUSS YOUR FUTURE LATER.
WHEN WE GET THERE, STAY BACK, OUT OF OUR WAY
EVEN IF HE'S RIGHT, I DON'T WANT ANOTHER PARTNER.
BRUCE, FOR ONCE, THINK WITH YOUR HEART, NOT WITH COLD LOGIC.
HE DOESN'T WANT ME, BUT HE HASN'T SAID NO. SO JUST DO YOUR BEST...
... ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THE REST WILL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF.
16


HE FOUND ME ALREADY? I HAVEN'T BEEN HERE TWO HOURS.
THE MAN'S A DEAR--AH! CALM DOWN, CALM DOWN. I CAN STILL MAKE THIS WORK.
GEMINI
AUTOMOBILE WRECKAGE SPECIALISTS
WHAT'S SALVAGE?
YOU'VE LED ME THIS FAR. NOW? DO I DO NOW?
SPEAK TO ME! DON'T ABANDON ME NOW--SPEAK TO ME!!
SPORTS NEXT ON WBKW, GOTHAM'S ONLY 24-HOUR ALL-NEWS STATION.
STAY IN THE BATMOBILE. NIGHTWING AND I WILL TAKE CARE OF TWO-FACE.
OKAY, NO PROBLEM.
JUST BE CAREFUL.
BATMAN!! WATCH OUT!
NO!


TIM!?!
MY GOD! I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE--
...BATMAN...
TIM? WOW--
WHEN I SAW THE BALL, I JUMPED OUT THE OTHER DOOR AND UNDER THE BATMOBILE.
IT WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF.
I'M SORRY I COULDN'T WARN YOU IN TIME.
DON'T BE. YOU SAVED US AND YOURSELF.
BATMAN, UP HERE. TWO-FACE IS GONE.
HE HASN'T LEFT HE'S HERE SOME-PLACE.
STAY WITH ME. DON'T WANDER
NIGHTWING!
THOUGH I PREFERRED IT WHEN I HAD TO DEAL WITH JUST THE TWO OF YOU--
-- I'LL GLADLY TAKE ON ONE MORE FOR GOOD LUCK'
KRAK
18


MY GOOD LUCK, NOT YOURS!
BATMAN, WHAT DO WE DO?
BACK OFF. GET OUT OF THE WAY.
IT'S UP TO ME. I'M THE ONLY ONE WITH MANEUVERING ROOM.
NO! GET AWAY FROM ME!
HARVEY, GIVE IT UP.
THERE'S NO PLACE FOR YOU TO GO.
19

MY COIN WILL DETERMINE YOUR FATE.
NO, HARVEY, IT'S YOUR MISTAKE.
DON'T YOU KNOW, YOU CAN'T KILL BATMAN AND NIGHTWING?
OR ROBIN?
OR ROBIN!
20


WE DID IT. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IT WOULD FEEL LIKE--
--BUT IT'S BETTER THAN I COULD'VE IMAGINED.
MR. WAYNE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO BE THE NEW ROBIN...
THIS HAS BEEN THE GREATEST DAY OF MY LIFE.
BRUCE, YOU HAVE TO ADMIT HE WAS GOOD.
AND FROM WHAT MASTER RICHARD SAYS, HE FOLLOWS YOUR ORDERS.
I DON'T WANT A PARTNER.
IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
AFTER ALL YOU'VE GONE THROUGH, I UNDERSTAND. IT'S STILL BEEN WONDERFUL.
TIM, I SAID IT WAS AS SIMPLE AS THAT, AND I WISH IT WERE.
UNFORTUNATELY, I'M NOT SURE IT IS.
FIRST, YOU KNOW MY IDENTITY.
I WOULDN'T SAY ANYTH--
I KNOW. BUT THAT AS A CONSIDERATION. BUT IT'S WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER...
I CREATED BATMAN TO PROJECT AN IMAGE. IT SUCCEEDED.
TO BE EFFECTIVE, THE SYMBOL HAS TO BE GREATER THAN THE REALITY.
BATMAN AND ROBIN. MAYBE THEY HAVE TO BE A TEAM.
THOUGH SOMETIMES I THINK I MAY HAVE CREATED A FRANKENSTEIN.
21

YOU MEAN I'M IN? I CAN BE THE NEW ROBIN?
WHOA--I STILL DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT YOU.
AND I'M NOT MAKING ANY COMMITMENTS.
I WANT TO TAKE THIS ONE DAY AT A TIME.
BUT IF YOU'RE WILLING TO TRY--
--WE'LL TRY.
THANKS, MR. WAYNE... BRUCE.
I'LL TRY TO EARN YOUR TRUST.
DENT, YOU'RE SUCH A FOOL. YOU WERE HIDING OUT, SAFE AND SOUND.
YOUR RIDICULOUS CODY TOLD YOU TO GIVE UP CRIME, FOREVER.
AND YOU WOULD HAVE, IF I HADN'T FOUND YOU.
OH, I KNEW YOU COULD NEVER HAVE KILLED BATS.
BUT YOU COULD KEEP HIM BUSY WHILE I RECOVERED FROM MY LAST ENCOUNTER WITH HIM.
IT'S SO GOOD KNOWING I COULD CONTROL THINGS, EVEN FROM MY HOSPITAL BED.
WHAT A SHAME HE'S GOT A NEW BOAT THOUGH.
STILL, EASY COME, EASY GO!
HAHAHAHA!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE CRIMESMITH

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN, President & Editor-In-Chief
DICK GIORDANO, VP-Editorial
DENNIS O'NEIL, Editor
DAN RASPLER, Assistant Editor
RICHARD BRUNING, Design Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM, Managing Editor
BOB ROZAKIS, Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ, Executive VP & Publisher
JOE ORLANDO, VP-Creative Director
BRUCE BRISTOW, VP-Sales & Marketing
MATTHEW RAGONE, Circulation Director
TOM BALLOU, Advertising Director
PATRICK CALDON, VP & Controller

L-5182

Dear Editor,

BATMAN: YEAR THREE was a whole lot better than YEARS ONE and TWO. Well, why not? You finally spotlighted my all-time favorite character—Dick Grayson!

THANK YOU for bringing back Dick Grayson to the pages of BATMAN, even though it was for such a short stay. I've waited a very long time for Dick's return. In the future could you please have him visit a little more often?

Until Grayson comes back,

Michelle E. Koller
64174 Campground Road
Romeo, MI 48065

*****

Dear Denny,

I was surprised at how well YEAR THREE has turned out. Its relevance to current events has made this story every bit as powerful as Miller's YEAR ONE. At last, we're seeing the real effects on Bruce, and Batman, of Jason's death. For a man as obsessive as Bruce Wayne, as Batman, the death of a boy he had personally taken under his wing, as a boy and as a partner, is a blow as crippling as the death of his own parents. And poor Bruce Wayne doesn't have the ability to share his burdens with anyone. His job demands absolute self-reliance, and his life demands that he keep his innermost feelings to himself. Or so he believes. But it isn't hard to see how much damage this can do. It's not good for anyone to bottle up his emotions. When you're as driven as Batman is, those held-in tensions are even more dangerous, and even Dick is held at bay—even Dick can't help him.

Tying in current events with Dick Grayson's own origins was a simple device, performed very well by Marv Wolfman. It was also necessary to enable YEAR THREE to indeed tell the story of that third year, or third phase, in Batman's career, and this association between past and present made current events all the more emotive. I think we all had a quiet cheer when Zucco was gunned down, figuring he'd met his just reward, although we all then breathed a sigh of relief when we found out Batman wasn't a passive accomplice in this crime. Even Dick must have felt, in some way, glad.

The significant event of the last chapter, of course, was that Dick, Nightwing, solved the puzzle before his former partner did. This indicated both how far Dick has progressed from his early days, and how far backward Batman has gone in the past few months. He's done what he always said not to do, started thinking with his fists, and inevitably, it doesn't work.

The important thing is to follow up this story, and I believe we're in for quite a tale in the next few BATMAN, and TITANS books, resolving this crisis. I also believe that there may be a new Robin on the horizon. It isn't that long since I wondered about giving up the Batman titles, but for the past few months both BATMAN and TEC have hit the heights again, and there's a third title on the way. It's Bat-time again...

Take care,

Malcolm Bourne
6 Craigwell Road
Prestwich, Manchester
M25 8EF, ENGLAND

As you know from reading this issue, there IS a new Robin (which we almost managed to keep a secret except for a production error that spilled the beans prematurely in the BATMAN #440 lettercol. Oops.) Not everyone is thrilled that there is a new Robin, however...

*****

People,

I really cannot have more ambivalent feelings toward the use of a Robin in the BATMAN books. Initially I thought that Robin was necessary to tone down and contrast with Batman's grim persona. Later I decided that Batman worked best alone as the dark avenger of the night. Regardless of how I feel, my thoughts are quite redundant. I understand DC already has a new Robin in the works. That's okay, I guess. After all, Robin doesn't have to appear in every single Batman story. And I'm sure that he won't play a major role in the upcoming third Batman title, which I hear is to be darker in tone than BATMAN and DETECTIVE. So, my major gripe is actually of a "fashion" nature. I really hate Robin's costume. Who was it created to strike fear into—mimes? A comedian once commented that Vice President Dan Quayle was a walking bullet-proof vest for President Bush. After all, who would try to assassinate the President knowing what lurks behind him as the next Commander-In-Chief? To draw parallels—Wouldn't Robin make a better target than Batman?

I enjoyed BATMAN: YEAR THREE. It was nice seeing Batman and Nightwing together. They actually appear to make a better team than Batman and Robin ... well, at least aesthetically. I once made a comment in the *Amazing Heroes* letter column that Nightwing was the intermediate larval stage between Batman and Robin. Okay—it's goofy, but in retrospect shouldn't Robin's garb be closer to that of Batman's or at least Nightwing's? Just a thought.

Be good.

Your pal,
Lon Wolf
2118 Ryan's Run East
Maple Shade, NJ 08052

Intermediate larval stage?

We've got more of your speculations about the new Robin, but no room to run them this month, so we'll continue this discussion next time. Meanwhile, we've got about a million questions to answer...

*****

Dear Denny & Dan,

Batman may be getting nastier, but he hasn't sacrificed his ethics totally. On page two of BATMAN #439, we learn that Batman *didn't* leave the KGBeast to die in issue #420! We also learn that the KGBeast is still on the loose.

So when is the YEAR TWO trade paperback coming out?

Charlie Harris
Tucson, AZ

In January. It will have a new wrap-around cover by Alan Davis and Paul Neary and an introduction by Mike W. Barr. And about the time that comes out, we'll have a surprise announcement related to those three gentlemen.

*****

Dear Bat-Team,

I've been watching the BATMAN series on TV for about five years and I thought it was time I took a look at the comic book. So, I went over to my local newsstand and picked up a BATMAN. I went home and I didn't even take my shoes off before I started reading it. I've only been collecting BATMAN for two weeks and I now have 4 times as many BATMAN comics as I have of New Mutants.

Keep on dishin' out the good BATMANs.

Ben M. Alsip
Hinsdale, IL

Sounds like a good slogan—"Comics so good, you don't have to take your shoes off!"

Well, maybe not...

*****

BAT-QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Due to the incredible success of the BATMAN movie, we've found ourselves deluged with hundreds of new readers, most of them with dozens of questions about our various Batman publications. We'd like to take a little space to answer some of the more general questions:

1) Back issues of our comics and publications are NOT available from DC. Please DO NOT send us money for back issues—we DON'T have any! Folks selling back issues occasionally advertise in our comics, and your local comics shop should have a good supply of back issues. If you don't know where the comic book shop closest to your home is, check in your local yellow pages under COMIC BOOKS or BOOKS—USED.

2) Subscriptions to our comics ARE available. Details can be found in the indicia (the teeny-weeny type usually appearing on page 1 of all our books), or look for our subscription ads, which run in many of our titles. The subscription ads always advertise a discount or some other special offer, so they are worth seeking out—but PLEASE send your subscriptions and money to the address given in the advertisement or in the indicia. DO NOT send subscriptions to this letter column. If you send subscriptions here, it's very possible that your subscription will be delayed for at least a month or your money could get lost. As you can imagine, the Batman titles get LOTS of mail...

3) Speaking of mail, we get a lot of letters that we can't read because the handwriting is really poor. You don't have to type your letters, but you have to make your handwriting legible so our tired old eyes can make out what you are trying to say. If you do type, PLEASE double-space your letters. And those of you with computers, please change the ribbon on your printer occasionally. BATMAN is currently receiving about 200 letters every month. We can only print about 10, under normal circumstances. Your letter stands a much better chance of being considered for publication if it is well thought out and NEAT! Thanks!

4) Due to the incredible volume of mail that we get, we cannot respond personally to any mail (there are just so many hours in any given day). Nor can we give out the addresses of any of the writers or artists. If you want to write directly to any of the creative people, put the letter in a separate, STAMPED envelope, and we will forward your letter to the appropriate person.

5) We have NO Batman merchandise for sale through this letter column. In fact, we have very little to do with the hundreds of T-shirts, buttons, posters, toys and other Bat-items (most of which are handled through our Licensing Department), so you are on your own when purchasing these items. Our advice is to be very careful about what you buy, as there are many 'bogus' Bat-items out there. Always look for TM symbols and Copyright notices on the items. This is not always a guarantee that the item is legit, but if it DOESN'T have this Copyright info, it's DEFINITELY a rip-off.

6) Original artwork is NOT available from us. All original artwork is the property of the artists and is returned to them after the issue is published. Many artists sell their original art, mostly at conventions or through advertisements in comic-related magazines and newspapers.

* * * * *

CONTINUITY CORNER

We've also been asked a lot of questions regarding several Batman-related publications and we thought we'd take a little more space to answer these here:

1) Many people have noticed several discrepancies in Robin's (Dick Grayson version) origin between the original telling and the recent re-cap in BATMAN: YEAR THREE. The BATMAN: YEAR THREE story has superceded all previous Robin origins and is now considered the "definitive" origin. Jason Todd's history was recently re-capped in the Who's Who page in BATMAN ANNUAL #13 which is based on the revised origin from BATMAN #408. All previous origins of Jason/Robin are apocryphal. (The Who's Who pages in both BATMAN ANNUAL #13 and DETECTIVE COMICS ANNUAL #2 have all the up-to-date info on many of Batman's friends and foes.)

2) Discrepancies between the BATMAN movie and DC's BATMAN MOVIE ADAPTATION came about because Denny O'Neil and Jerry Ordway began working on the comic book long before final editing was completed on the film. Denny and Jerry worked for close to four months on the adaptation and *had* to begin work on the project before the film was completed in order for the book to ship when the movie came out. (Almost *all* comic book adaptations of movies have to be done this way.) Many changes were made in the movie during the editing process, especially in the ending, and these changes were made so late that they could not be incorporated into the adaptation.

3) By the way, the BATMAN movie (as well as the BATMAN MOVIE ADAPTATION), IS NOT a part of Batman continuity.

4) Speaking of the Joker's origin, the tale told in BATMAN: THE KILLING JOKE is NOT the definitive origin of the Joker. It's simply one of many POSSIBLE origins. As the Joker himself states (in THE KILLING JOKE: page 39), "Sometimes I remember it *one* way, sometimes *another* ... If I'm going to have a *past*, I prefer it to be *multiple choice!* Ha Ha Ha!"

5) Since it is set about 20 years in the future, BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS is also NOT considered to be a part of normal continuity. It is a POSSIBLE future for Batman, one which may or may not happen. We're NOT saying that it couldn't happen, but it would be a shame to limit the Batman's future to this one story. (Besides, if THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS were the letter of the law, Batman would have retired following the murder of Jason, and as you can see by the current story, Batman is well on the way to recovery from his great loss.)

* * * * *

NEXT ISSUE: Who is the new mastermind of Gotham City's underworld? Batman is baffled by a series of brilliantly executed crimes ... and an impossible murder in a story by Marv Wolfman, Jim Aparo, and Mike DeCarlo. And in DETECTIVE #610, the Penguin dies. But he rises from the grave to plague Gotham City! And to solve the mystery of the mysterious bat-man, Bruce Wayne constructs a workshop in the caverns beneath Wayne Manor in a flashback story in LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #2. And don't forget GOTHAM BY GASLIGHT and ARKHAM ASYLUM and keep on the lookout for a wild Batman poster painted by Steve Rude. See ya!

—KC Carlson
Letter Wrangler to the Stars

From the Den

Mac gave her birth certificate to the woman at the passport office. The woman scanned it and asked, "Is this the original?"

"Yes," Mac said.

The woman pushed the paper across the counter. "Not acceptable," she said. "We only take copies."

The issuance of Mac's passport was delayed a couple of days, which is exactly what she deserved for being such a competent, organized person that she never managed to lose an important document. (Me, I've lost my birth certificate at least five times; I groaned through the whole process.)

I mulled the implications. What the government was telling us—correct me if I'm wrong—is that copies are more valid than originals. Okay. In that case:

Yellow paint is preferable to gold.
Rich Little is the world's finest actor.
The map is better than the territory.
Parrots are intelligent.
When a teacher makes a student copy paragraphs from a textbook, the teacher is developing the student's creativity.
Statues are great company.
Photographs are greater company.
Plagiarism is a virtuous act.
A postcard is superior to the Eiffel Tower.

Enough. I'd like to add to the list, but I'm hungry, so I've got to go read a cookbook.

By the way, what you see below is a photostat of a signature I did a couple of years ago.